
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

★ news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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PACIFIC FLYWAY WINTERING WATERFOWL ESTIMATES DOWN SEVEN PERCENT

A decline of seven percent in the estimated number of wintering waterfowl in the Pacific Flyway, compared with a year ago, was reported today by the Department of the Interior. The decrease was due primarily to a five percent decline in ducks observed and a 40 percent drop in coots. The number of geese observed was up 11 percent. Whistling swans, a fully-protected bird, were 20 percent below the number seen in 1961.

Redheads and canvasbacks, even though protected by complete hunting closures, declined 53 and 21 percent, respectively.

The 1962 estimates are based upon the annual winter survey made by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Fish and Wildlife Service, and cooperating State and Federal agencies.

Within the flyway, small gains were noted in Washington, Idaho, and on the west coast of Mexico. Small to moderate declines were noted in the remaining areas, including Alaska, British Columbia, Oregon, Nevada, California, Utah, and Arizona.

A total of 379 State and Federal observers participated in this annual survey of wintering waterfowl. In addition to car and boat travel, 40 aircraft were used for aerial observation. Flights totaled more than 28,000 miles.

The purpose of the annual survey is to obtain an indication of waterfowl population trends and to estimate the waterfowl remaining after the close of the hunting season, as well as to record changes in the wintering distribution pattern of ducks and geese from year to year.

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